



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Art Gallery of Nova Scotia appoints seven community leaders as new Honorary Governors

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The Art Gallery of Nova Scotia (AGNS) is pleased to announce the appointment of seven new Honorary Governors, including Mark Bursey, Diane Campbell, Cecil Day, Elizabeth Enders, Dennice Leahey, Rod McCulloch, and John Volcko.

“I am delighted to recognize and celebrate these respected community leaders whose generosity and longstanding commitment to the arts sector has helped shape Nova Scotia’s cultural landscape,” says Sarah Moore Fillmore, CEO, AGNS. “On behalf of the AGNS, I would like to extend my warm congratulations and sincere gratitude. The support of our new Honorary Governors has directly contributed to the growth and resilience of the Gallery and the broader arts ecosystem in our Province.”

Honorary Governors reinforce AGNS leadership strength and reaffirm the essential role of community stewardship in advancing public access to the arts. As ambassadors and champions for the Gallery, they lend their insight and experience, supporting the AGNS mission, vision and values.

The new Honorary Governors join a distinguished group that includes Carol Dodds, Fred Fountain, Robert Geraghty, Mary Maddox, Sir Christopher Ondaatje, Merv Russell, Elizabeth Ryan, Robbie Shaw, Robert Sobey, and Farhad Vladi. Together, they reflect a deep and sustained commitment to philanthropy, cultural leadership, and the growth of the arts, helping to shape healthier, and more vibrant communities for all Nova Scotians and visitor to the province.

“The arts play an essential role in shaping thoughtful, connected communities,” says Dennice Leahey, AGNS Honorary Governor. “The AGNS is a leader in that work, and I’m proud to join as an Honorary Governor alongside my fellow appointees who are committed to strengthening its impact and ensuring its continued success for years to come.”

These appointments reaffirm the vital role of partnerships between cultural organizations, community leaders, and government, ensuring that the arts remain a meaningful, impactful, and enduring voice in our province and beyond.

Quotes:

“I am delighted to recognize and celebrate these respected community leaders whose generosity and longstanding commitment to the arts sector has helped shape Nova Scotia’s cultural landscape through the arts. On behalf of the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, I would like to extend my warm and sincere congratulations and gratitude. The support of our new Honorary Governors has directly contributed to the growth and resilience of the Gallery and the broader arts ecosystem.” - Sarah Moore Fillmore, CEO, Art Gallery of Nova Scotia.

“The arts play an essential role in shaping thoughtful, connected communities. The Art Gallery of Nova Scotia is a leader in that work, and I’m proud to join as an Honorary Governor alongside my fellow appointees who are committed to strengthening its impact and ensuring its continued success.” - Dennice Leahey, AGNS Honorary Governor.

“Coming at a time when arthritis prevents me from making prints as I have in the past, this award is especially meaningful. I am deeply honoured to be among others who believe strongly in the value of the arts in Nova Scotia. The Art Gallery of Nova Scotia introduced me to the many Canadian and Nova Scotian artists I admire. I have always loved wandering through its galleries, experiencing art from different periods and cultures, and observing the varied perspectives and approaches to art-making.” - Cecil Day, AGNS Honorary Governor

New Honorary Governor Appointee Bios:

Mark Bursey

Mark Bursey has been closely connected to the arts through his long-standing involvement with cultural institutions across Canada. Through his service on numerous boards and committees and his patronage of the arts, he has supported spaces where artists and audiences can encounter challenging and relevant art, contributing to a broader cultural dialogue that is both responsive and accessible. His sustained engagement aligns with the Gallery’s commitment to presenting contemporary work and fostering meaningful connections between art and community. Mark previously served as Chair of the AGNS Board of Directors and as former Vice-Chair of the McMichael Canadian Art Foundation Board.

Diane Campbell

Diane Campbell is a committed supporter of the arts whose engagement is rooted in generosity, care, and a belief in the value of cultural life. Through her leadership in the business community and her longstanding involvement with arts organizations, she has

helped strengthen spaces where creativity, learning, and connection can flourish. Diane's approach reflects a deep conviction that the arts play a vital role in fostering shared experience and understanding. Her steady commitment and thoughtful engagement embody the Gallery's values of stewardship, inclusion, and public connection. Diane Campbell is the former President and CEO of Berkley Holdings Limited and was inducted into the Nova Scotia Business Hall of Fame in 2018.

Cecil Day

Artist Cecil Day has become a major figure in Atlantic Canadian printmaking since moving to Canada in 1979, both through her artwork and her support of emerging printmakers. Cecil's practice mirrors the Gallery's commitment to art that connects people with place while inviting reflection and broader public engagement. Her long-standing teaching and community practice further reflect the Gallery's values of learning and inclusion. Cecil Day's work is included in the permanent collections of The Rooms Provincial Art Gallery, Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, Nova Scotia Art Bank, University of New Brunswick Arts Centre, Canada Council Art Bank, and many private collections.

Elizabeth Enders

Artist Elizabeth Enders has enriched Nova Scotia's visual arts through her evocative paintings and sustained engagement with the cultural life of the province. Elizabeth's artistic practice reflects a deep dialogue with the province's coastal light and open spaces, capturing both the spirit of place and the imagination of viewers and fellow artists. Her work and ongoing engagement exemplify the Gallery's commitment to creativity that is rooted in place and resonant across communities. Elizabeth is represented by the Betty Cunningham Gallery, New York City. Her work is included in number of permanent collections including the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston and the Whitney Museum, New York.

Dennice Leahey

A career banker, Dennice rose throughout the RBC Financial Group to be Regional President of Manitoba, Nunavut and North-western Ontario, retiring as Senior Vice President and Ombudsman for the organization's employees and customers worldwide. Volunteering throughout her career, she sat on Hospital, University, College, Aboriginal, Government, Cultural Institution and Community Boards and currently sits on 6 non-profit boards. Retiring in 2002 to Pugwash, her husband's hometown and Halifax, she was honoured with the Eagle Feather in 1997, named a Member of the Order of Canada in 2005 and received an Honorary Doctor in Humane Letters from MSVU in 2014. Through her advocacy and longstanding engagement, Dennice has

consistently championed the role of cultural institutions as vital spaces for dialogue, learning, and shared experience across the province and beyond.

Rod McCulloch

Rod McCulloch has been an active contributor to the cultural life of Nova Scotia through his sustained involvement with arts organizations and community initiatives. Rod co-founded the Blue Nose Marathon in 2004 to raise money for local charities and encourage active lifestyles. His engagement has supported the growth of programs, events, and campaigns that enrich the lives of Nova Scotians. Rod has played a steady role in strengthening the structures that enable cultural institutions to thrive, particularly through collaboration, stewardship, and public participation. The impact of his contributions reflects the Gallery's commitment to building lasting relationships between art, community, and shared experience. In 2016 Rod was recognized with a Meritorious Service medal from the Governor General of Canada.

John Volcko

John Volcko has contributed to the strategic guidance and sustainability of cultural institutions in Nova Scotia through his long-standing involvement with arts organizations and board service, including the AGNS Board of Directors from 2010-2016. His engagement reflects a commitment to supporting meaningful artistic experiences and fostering the capacity of institutions to present and preserve art. Through his governance and stewardship, John has contributed to the resilience and long-term vitality of cultural organizations in Nova Scotia. His contributions have strengthened the Gallery's commitment to accessibility, public connection, and promoting the enduring impact of art. John is Vice President, Corporate Development, National Operations at PCL Constructors Canada Inc.

Quick Facts:

The Art Gallery of Nova Scotia is appointing seven new Honorary Governors: Mark Bursey, Diane Campbell, Cecil Day, Elizabeth Enders, Dennice Leahey, Rod McCulloch, and John Volcko.

These new appointees join 10 existing Honorary Governors including Carol Dodds, Fred Fountain, Robert Geraghty, Mary Maddox, Sir Christopher Ondaatje, Merv Russell, Elizabeth Ryan, Robbie Shaw, Robert Sobey, and Farhad Vladi.

Honorary Governors are selected for their record of service to the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia and their commitment to strengthening its future. They are respected community leaders who serve as ambassadors for the Gallery, helping to champion the

value of the arts in Nova Scotia by connecting more people across the province with the AGNS, its exhibitions, programs, and people.

Honorary Governors advocate and build public support for the Gallery. They do not take part in governance or make decisions related to public offerings or the collection.

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Media Requests:

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About the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia

The Art Gallery of Nova Scotia is the largest art museum in Atlantic Canada. Since 1908, the Gallery has been a gateway for the visual arts in Atlantic Canada by engaging people with art. It is committed to this mission as an agency of the Province of Nova Scotia and one of the premier arts institutions in Canada. The Gallery is also responsible for acquiring, preserving, and exhibiting works of art, and for providing education in the visual arts. Visit agns.ca for more information.